IV

Polyandry and Joint Marriages

The Kaingáng are ruled by hunger and swayed by the strength of their libidinal ties, and they have in some degree overcome the one by building on the other. Food and sex have become so closely interwoven in the Kaingáng mind that they even use the same term for eating as they do for coitus. In human relationships the overt, articulate emphasis is always upon food, and the strongest bond that one man can have with another is that he suffered hunger with him. When the soul of the deceased is sped on its way the dead man's relative, tormented by the fear that he might be taken along by the ghost, shouts as he pounds the dead body on the chest: "Leave me and go! You and I suffered great hunger together; so leave me and go!" Now, since men are the principal sources of food supply, talk of marriage centers primarily on their value as providers for the girls and their parents and brothers and sisters. When a man speaks of his marriage he does not discuss the qualities of his wife nor the material advantage to him of the alliance, but of feeding his wife and her relatives. "First I married Kulú," said Vomblé. "Then I left her and married Kulá. My father's brother sent her to me. At the same time Wanenggló sent his sister Waikfli to me, but I sent her to my brother Ndfli. When she left him he married Kulá. I lived only with Kulá. I went hunting with Waikfli but sent her to Ndfli. Two women have many children, and my wives had no families that were capable of giving me food. Yet I had to feed my children. I was hungry. My father [Thunder Storm] had three wives, but they had brothers who could give him food. I have to give things to Kulá's brothers and sisters, but they could give nothing because they were so small. Waikfli had only one brother."

Through her marriage Kulá's family gained Vomblé as an ally in the

2: Henry E-5 (1932-1934) 1941
SM3 Caingang SM3
Aweikoma

Then she went *hû hû hû hû*—she was imitating the macuca. She was saying in the song that the macuca was eating something. The food of the macuca is in its throat. That is what she meant by *nyatka vēlē*." A free translation of the little song is: "I dance in my customary dance place, and as I dance, the fruit tumbles into my mouth." The symbolism of the song and cry is transparent to the Kaingáng. "Probably," said my informant, "she is telling in her song about having seen macuca dancing. Probably she used to dance with them."

When Thalú had finished, she called to her former husband Chu: "'Come and look him over.' He came over and looked at Kukéye, who was lying on a robe. He rubbed his hands over him and then blew on him. Then he uttered the cry of the howler monkey, *nggû nggû nggû nggû*. He spat all over Kukéye." He prophesied that the patient would live, saying, "I have seen that my offspring will eat pine pollen." Now was the time for Chu to announce his bond with the supernatural, and he cried, "Am I the voice of the useful *cipo* [vine]!" meaning by that that he "was" the howler monkey that sits upon the cipo. "He was saying that he was a supernatural being. Then he stopped and said to his relatives, 'Wash him with some other remedy.' So they washed him with *tutolo*. Kukéye went *'He'* and vomited blood. He opened his eyes. Chu had thrown all the poison out of him."

English is poor in words indicating existence. In English we may say, "It is a tapir," and to us this simple statement will seem clear and definitive. But to a Kaingáng Indian the statement, "It is a tapir," would seem extraordinarily vague. He would want to know whether the tapir was standing up or lying down, whether it was walking around or standing still. In the Kaingáng language there are words meaning "to be" that convey in addition some such concepts as these. There is still another that implies probability and blurs the edges of existential categories. All of these can have but one translation in English—"to be." When Chu says, "Am I the voice of the useful cipo?" he frames his utterance in the category last mentioned and in this way does nothing more than indicate his bond with the howler monkey.[17] The expression itself is really untranslatable; but its general feeling is one of indefinite assertion. It by no means implies that Chu is a howler monkey.

A striking example of the close bond between a shaman and the phenomenon from whose spirit he once obtained supernatural powers was provided me one winter's day during a storm. Kemblén, who numbered wind among his many guardian spirits, has been dead a number of years, but still his *kuplêng*[18] is powerful and may influence the natural world to the injury

[17] Because the howler monkey holds on to the vine and makes a noise.

[18] Ghost-soul.

x539 came there and pierced it. When he pierced it for them he ate honey with them. But in the meanwhile they did not give any to *lœŋ'dʒili*. When he saw this he stole the water from them. So when he stole the water he would always go away to drink. Now, when he saw that they did not give him any honey he did that to the water and so they were thirsty. Then they said to him, "Is the water near here?" That is what they said to *lœŋ'dʒili*. Then he said, "No. Water is far away. I really have to travel, then I drink water." So, since they were thirsty they licked and sucked damp rocks. In the meanwhile *tʃi'klœ* did the same as they and was walking around licking damp rocks. In the meanwhile *lœŋ'dʒili* was coming along. When *tʃi'klœ* heard this he hid himself. In the meanwhile *lœŋ'dʒili* did not see *tʃi'klœ*. So he tilted back big-turtle. In the meanwhile *tʃi'klœ* was looking on from his hiding place. In the meanwhile *lœŋ'dʒili* tilted back big-turtle and drank water. After drinking he closed it down on top. When he did this he went away. Then *tʃi'klœ* came over and tilted up big-turtle. Then he went, "Hi hi hi hi! I see water! I see water! I see water!" That is what he said. When they heard this they came there. Every single one of them came. In the meanwhile *lœŋ'dzili* came there. Then he took his big-turtle and placed it over the water. But they payed no attention to it. They did the same as he and tilted it up again. When *lœŋ'dʒili* saw this he stopped. In the meanwhile there were many of them in the water. Then they were all drinking. They were very thirsty that is why they looked for the water.

Notes.

194 x539 1 Honey or hive. Sometimes used also to mean bee. The word is *moŋ*, but under the influence of the following sound the *ŋ* has changed to *k* and the *o* has become nasalized.

● 196 x539 2 Insect. Used most often with respect to the bee in order to distinguish the honey from

●196 the bee. Thus, what is meant here is the
x539 honey's insect, i. e. bee.

x539 3 An element of wide functions used in this case simply for emphasis. This is a common practise in opening a story. In l. 15 it is seen again accompanying the nominal subject *kāt'kāla*, marcaná, because here it is desired to emphasize the fact that it was the marcaná that found the honey. But in l. 12 although the subject is the same the *ha* does not appear because there is no particular reason for emphasizing it.

x193 But the element *ha* has other functions:
x539 (1) As a relative it refers to some object or event in a preceding clause or statement, as in l. 50.

(2) As a demonstrative it means both "here" and "there". In l. 56 it means "there". It often occurs, but with considerable irregularity, with other demonstratives as a prefixed element without modifying their meaning. It is prefixed to locatives however to form demonstrative ideas.

Examples.

tɔ	there
ha'tɔ	there
ki and *ka*	in or on
ha'ki and *ha'ka*	here or there

ha occurs frequently in combination with locatives and demonstratives; less often with postpositions. It rarely occurs alone as a demonstrative.

4 A particle that accompanies third person subjects in the active form of the verb.

5 Flower. *kɔ* means tree. *'ɔ̂ɛyɛ* means flower. Thus, tree's flowers.

6 *tɔ* occurs regularly after nominal subjects, direct and indirect objects of verbs and objects of postpositions. Kaingang is rich in etymologically unanalyzable and stable nouns. That is to say, these do not undergo far-reaching changes and cannot be confused with other forms. To this group belong all of the personal names and names of objects. Yet, in spite of the fact that the nouns